AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1. (Original): An oval-spherical organic polymer particle having a single continuous curved surface, which particle is characterized by:

bearing an ionic functional group, and

having an aspect ratio P_1, calculated by the formula $P_1 = L_1/D_1$, wherein L_1 is the major axis and D_1 is the minor axis of a projected two-dimensional image obtained by shining light onto the particle from a direction orthogonal to the long axis of the particle, that satisfies the relationship $P_1 \geq 1.8$.

2. (Original): The oval-spherical organic polymer particle of claim 1 which is characterized in that the major axis L_1 is from 0.001 to 10,000 μm.

3. (Original): The oval-spherical organic polymer particle of claim 1 or 2 which is characterized in that the ionic functional group is an anionic functional group.

4. (Original): The oval-spherical organic polymer particle of claim 1 or 2 which is characterized in that the ionic functional group is a salt having a counterion.

5. (Original): The oval-spherical organic polymer particle of claim 3 which is characterized in that the anionic functional group has a metal cation as a counterion.

6. (Original): A method of producing the oval-spherical organic polymer particle of claim 1 or 2, the method being characterized by solution polymerizing a first organic monomer having an ionic functional group and a polymerizable group with a second organic monomer which is polymerizable with the first organic monomer.

7. (Original): The oval-spherical organic polymer particle producing method of claim 6 which is characterized by using a solution having a content of the first and second organic monomers combined of 1 to 80 wt%.

8. (Currently amended): The oval-spherical organic polymer particle producing method of claim 6 [[or 7]] which is characterized by carrying out dispersion polymerization in a solution that also contains a dispersant.

9. (New): The oval-spherical organic polymer particle producing method of claim 7 which is characterized by carrying out dispersion polymerization in a solution that also contains a dispersant.